



# General Development Committee Report

**Date:** April 9, 2001  
**To:** General Development Committee  
**Through:** Mike Hutchinson, City Manager  
**From:** Bryan Raines, Assistant to the City Manager  
**Subject:** Discuss and Consider Final Concept Design of the Downtown Pedestrian Connection (north-south phase) and Staff's Recommendations Regarding Site Preparation and Construction.

Council District No. 4

## Purpose and Recommendation

Discuss and consider Final Concept Design of the Downtown Pedestrian Connection (north-south phase) and Staff's recommendations regarding site preparation, construction, and funding issues.

## Background

In the fall of 1998, the Redevelopment Office applied for a Transportation Enhancement funds grant (TEA-21), as administered by the Arizona Department of Transportation, for the development of phase one of a network of pedestrian pathways in downtown Mesa. The first phase calls for the development of a design and subsequent construction of a north/south pedestrian pathway beginning at the Mesa Arts Center mid-block crossing (Main Street), continuing north up the Lewis alignment, through the government center campus, across First Street, past the Library, MAC, and Convention Center, with a terminus at the Mesa Amphitheater at 3<sup>rd</sup> Place.

In 1999, a consultant team was hired to analyze the site conditions and make recommendations regarding the alignment of the pathway. In addition, the team was responsible for conceiving three distinct artistic concepts that address those site conditions and proposed alignment. The consultant team is comprised of the Planning Center (urban and landscape design), Roberts Jones Associates (architect), Thinking Caps (graphic design and signage), and Michael Maglich (artist), with oversight by a design project team of City staff that includes, Tony Felice, Redevelopment; Kate O'Mara, Public Art, and Steve Stettler, Engineering.

Before the preparation of any design could occur, the site needed to be evaluated and recommendations needed to be made based upon the following criteria:

*User-defined Issues:* How can the pathway effectively relate to the different destinations along the alignment?

*Growth Needs:* How can the pathway be constructed so it does not interfere with future growth and development?

*Planning Principles:* How can the pathway be developed so that an effective pedestrian-oriented system can get people from parking areas and destinations to other destinations?

*As-Built Limitations:* How can the pathway be designed to incorporate existing sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, right-of-way issues, parking areas, existing curb cuts, landscape planters, and existing utilities.

*Artistic Sensibilities:* How can the pedestrian pathway integrate open space, rhythm, and incorporate artistic elements into functionality?

### Thematic Concepts

Three distinct thematic concepts were developed that address each of the challenges mentioned above in their own unique way. The thematic concepts were *The Line*, *The Grid*, and *The Flowing Edge*.

### **Discussion**

Each of the three thematic concepts was reviewed and voted on by the public. The design boards were on display in the City Plaza Building, the Mesa Main Public Library, the Southwest Museum, and on-line at the City's website. Citizens were asked to fill out comment cards regarding their favorite choice. We had over 180 comment cards and the voting resulted in a three-way tie. In addition, we held meetings with individual stakeholders including the Post Office, Library, Mesa Arts Center, Mesa Sheraton, and the Mesa Centennial Center.

### Final Design Concept

The Final Design solution is a culmination of the best features of each design. It uses the clear modular pattern of *The Grid* combined with a unifying line that meanders from end to end. *The Line* creates a unifying art element of multiple materials, while the Grid offers an overall sense of unity and organization. *The Line* could become a timeline and would change character to relate to various places along the path. At different locations along the path the pavements could be highly varied, creating identity and expression for nodes and crossings. Colors could range from muted to vibrant making the path an art piece itself. Trees become the predominant shade element and would be arranged using a fluid and meandering pattern in conjunction with refined, grid-like plantings in designated areas. (See Exhibit 1, Overall Final Concept and Exhibit 2, Final Concept Detail).

Today you are reviewing the overall final concept for the entire pedestrian pathway. We intend to spread the project out over a period of four fiscal years. The first phase will encompass the area along the Lewis alignment north from Main Street to the very north end of the Library (See Exhibit 3, Phase One Construction Area). Additional phases will comprise enhancements to this phase and additional pathway improvements to the Mesa Centennial Center & Amphitheater as well as being a link to Site 17.

The following detail is provided for information purposes with regard to the site preparation issues involved in phase one.

### Site Preparation Issues

In order to complete construction on the first phase of the Downtown Pedestrian Connection, the existing built environment will need to be modified and the site prepared and readied (please refer to Site Issues Map attached as Exhibit 4, numbers below correspond to numbers on the exhibit map). The entire site has been broken down into 12 areas that need to be addressed.

- 1 **Lewis Street** - The block of Lewis Street immediately north of Main Street is to be closed to vehicular traffic, and existing curbing and other existing street-lie improvements will be removed.
- 2 **Parking Area "A"** - This parking area will remain, although the single exit/entry off Lewis will be closed. It may be desirable to link this lot to Parking Area "B".
- 3 **Parking Area "B"** - Access off Lewis should be abandoned. Parking aisles and car shades should be reconfigured to accommodate new access off Pepper Street. The desirability of linking this lot to Parking Area "A" should be considered.
- 4 **Old Bank Drivethru** - The structure and associated multiple lanes are currently used primarily as inefficient covered parking.
- 5 **Parking Area "C"** - Access off Lewis should be abandoned. This lot should be reconfigured to allow for new access off Pepper Street.

**6 Pepper Place** - As a minimum, a "pedestrian friendly" traffic-calming crossing will need to be created at mid-block. Consideration should be given to converting the remaining east and west segments of this street for parking purposes. This could take the form of simply adding angled parking to both sides of the street, or more ambitiously, these areas could be fully reconfigured as part of the surrounding parking lots. In any case, east/west vehicular flow would be preserved albeit through a parking oriented environment. As it exists, this one block part of Pepper Street represents a very under-utilized pavement area.

**7 Parking Area "D"** - The new pedestrian connection will take approximately a 50-foot wide portion from the east end of this lot. The remaining cut-off eastern segment of this lot should be added to the reconfigured Parking Area "E".

**8 Parking Area "E"** - This lot should be expanded as described above and reconfigured for better efficiency. Currently, drive aisles are much larger than standard.

**9 First Street Crossing** - An enhanced "pedestrian friendly" traffic-calming crossing with a pedestrian refuge island which relates to the pathway concept will need to be created. It may be advisable to adjust the exact alignment of this crossing relative to the alignment of pathway improvements to the north.

**10 Parking Area "F"** - The drive aisle at the west side of this lot should be reduced by approximately 8 feet to a standard width so that a landscape buffer could be added. Minor adjustments to the driveway access at this end will be required to accommodate this change.

**11 Post Office Service/Parking Area** - It is desirable to incorporate a portion of the east row of parking in this lot (approximately 16') into the pathway landscape area. All of the existing 25 spaces in this area are substandard. A new perimeter wall would be constructed along the east side of this service area.

**12 Library and Terminus of the Project** - Pavements should be moved away from the library building edge. Flood irrigation in this area should be terminated, and grading should be reconfigured to drain away from the library. The new pathway pavements should extend for an aesthetic and functional link with the Mesa Centennial Center's exposed aggregate pavements.

### Compatibility with Light Rail

The project has been designed to work with Light Rail and will serve as a major pedestrian corridor that will get people from parking areas to light rail platforms which may be located on 1<sup>st</sup> Street or Main Street.

### Compatibility with Existing and Future Land Uses

The pedestrian pathway is modular in design. It is designed to accommodate future growth and changes to the buildings that will surround it--specifically the Library, Mesa Centennial Center and the Government Campus which may include a new parking structure and administrative tower. The mid-block style of the pathway is consistent with planning principals regarding the movement and flow of pedestrians in an urban environment. The pathway is designed so that vehicular access to the interior of each block is maintained, while at the same time pedestrians are moved from parking areas to the pedestrian corridor.

Moreover, the pathway is designed to include vertical elements and at-ground signage that will help users to identify where they are going and in what direction their destinations lay. Staff has worked closely with the Library, Mesa Centennial Center & Amphitheater, Post Office, Arts & Entertainment Center, and other existing land uses to encourage compatibility with these uses.

### Plaza Designed for Entertainment

The pathway is designed to become a destination itself. Nodes are built into the project so that special events could be held on the plaza with space for entertainers, food and craft vendors, and art exhibits.

### Public Art

The project has been designed with the input of an artist who has been retained to oversee artistic elements that are designed into the project. The pathway itself, including the materials it will be comprised of, is meant to be a public art statement. Further, even though its artistic elements are primarily functional, the pathway has been designed with "nodes" where separate art elements can be introduced at a later date. However, public art per se is not funded through this project.

**Fiscal Impact*****Phase One (Main Street to north end of Library).***

Site Preparation	\$124,518	
Design	80,000	
Construction (includes contingency)	680,229	
ADOT 15% Admin Fee	120,000	
Less TEA-21 Grant Funds	(481,503)	
Total City funds required	<del>\$403,244*</del>	523,244

***Future Phase (north end of Library to 3<sup>rd</sup> Place and enhancements not Built in phase one).***

Design	\$ 50,000
Construction	<u>\$1,716,756</u>
Total City Funds	\$2,290,000*

\*source: capital improvement project budget subject to adequate prioritization, ranking and budget allocation.

***Schedule***

<u>2001</u>	<u>2001/2</u>	<u>2002/3</u>	<u>2003/4</u>	<u>2004/5</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
	\$480,000	\$320,000	\$890,000	\$600,000	2,290,000

Note: Staff will continue to pursue additional supplemental funding through ADOT and MAG by applying for CMAQ or TEA-21 funds through various grant funding cycles.

**Alternatives**

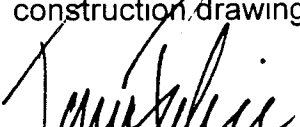
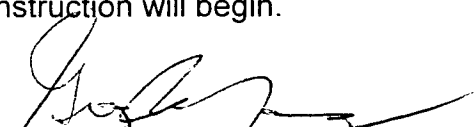
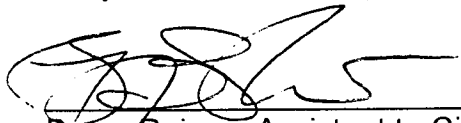
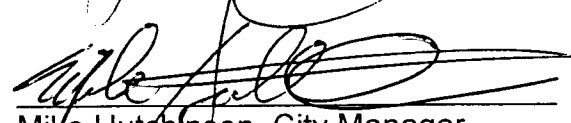
1. Fund the project up to only the amount allotted in the TEA-21 grant (\$481,503).
2. Fund the site-preparation costs separately (\$124,518) and the project up to only the amount allotted in the TEA-21 grant (\$481,503).
3. Fully fund Phase One of the project as outlined.

## Concurrence

The development of a pedestrian-oriented downtown has been identified as a priority in all downtown redevelopment planning documents including: the *Connections Report*, the *Downtown Vision Plan*, the *Redevelopment Plan*, and the *Downtown Concept Plan*. The implementation of a network of pedestrian pathways that link destinations, move pedestrians from parking areas, encourage discovery, and provide a cohesive bond for bringing people and places together requires the cooperation and concurrence of individually affected interests (i.e., Mesa Arts Center, Library, Amphitheater, and Sheraton), as well as the citizens who will be using these facilities.

The need for these pathways has been routinely established. Therefore, potentially affected interests have been included in the planning process, and the experts have been consulted to conduct the relevant due diligence necessary to bring this project forward to the public for consideration.

The Downtown Development Committee forwarded its unanimous approval of the final concept at its January 18, 2001 meeting. Once Council approves the design and funding, we will prepare a design concept report that will be submitted to the Arizona Department of Transportation for evaluation. Upon ADOT's approval, construction drawings will be prepared and construction will begin.

  
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Tony Felice, Redevelopment Planner  
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Greg Marek, Redevelopment Director  
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Bryan Raines, Assistant to City Manager  
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Mike Hutchinson, City Manager

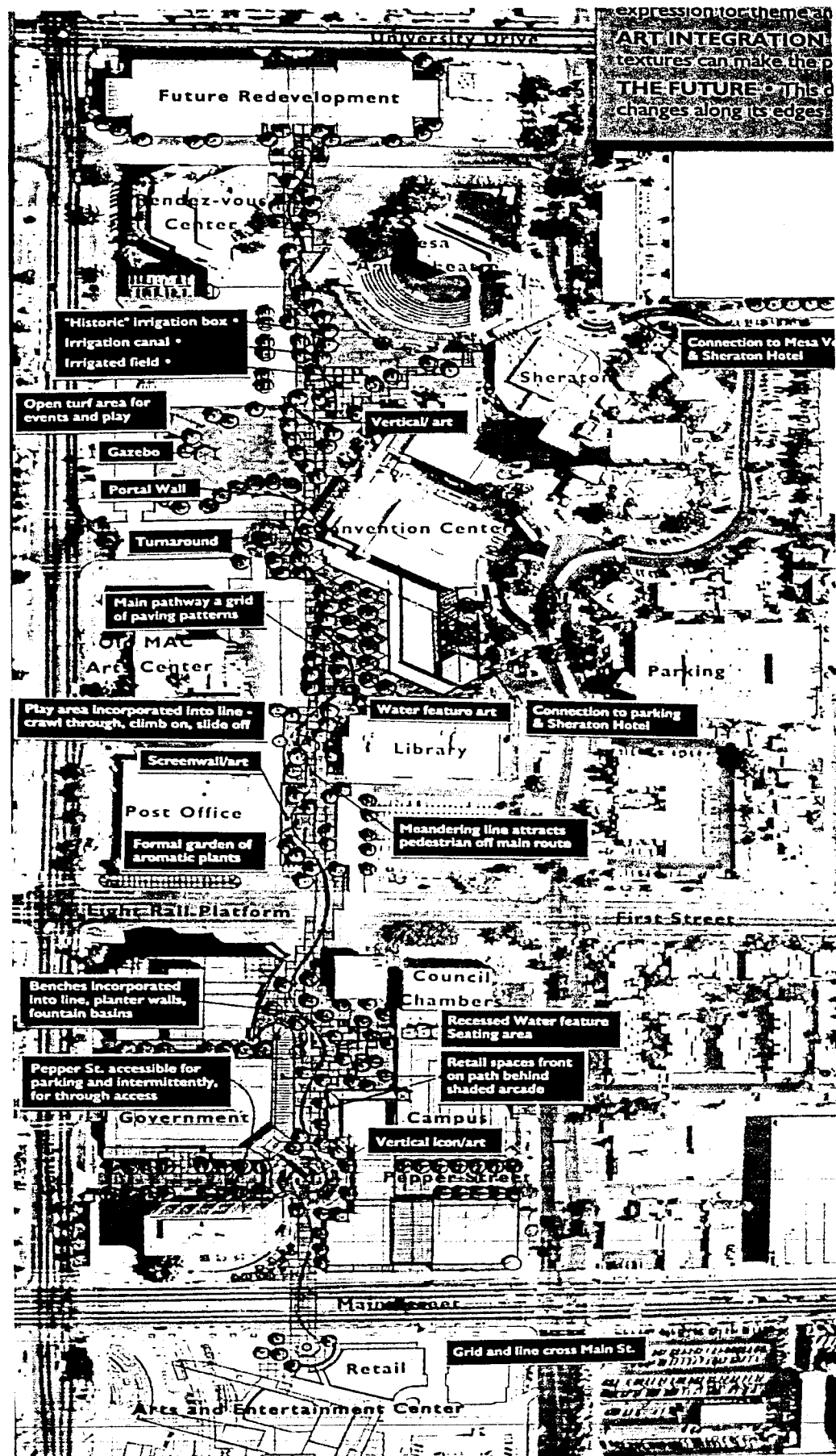
## Attachments

- Exhibit 1 – Overall Final Concept
- Exhibit 2 – Final Concept Detail
- Exhibit 3 – Phase One Construction Area
- Exhibit 4 – Numbered Site Issues Map

# DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

EXHIBIT 1

## OVERALL FINAL CONCEPT





# DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

EXHIBIT 2

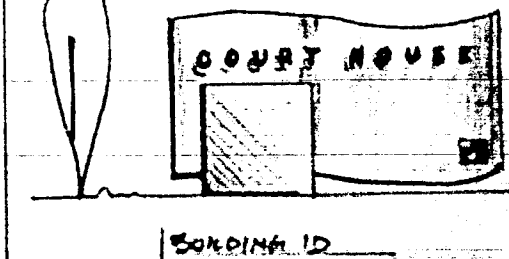
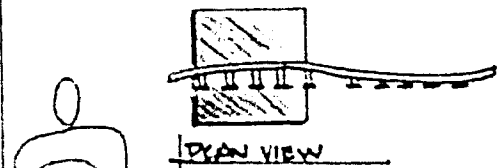
## FINAL CONCEPT DETAIL

Custom bench is continuous part of the line raised to 18" Pedestrian theme reinforced throughout with images of footprints and shoes. Retail shops front onto pathway along covered arcade.

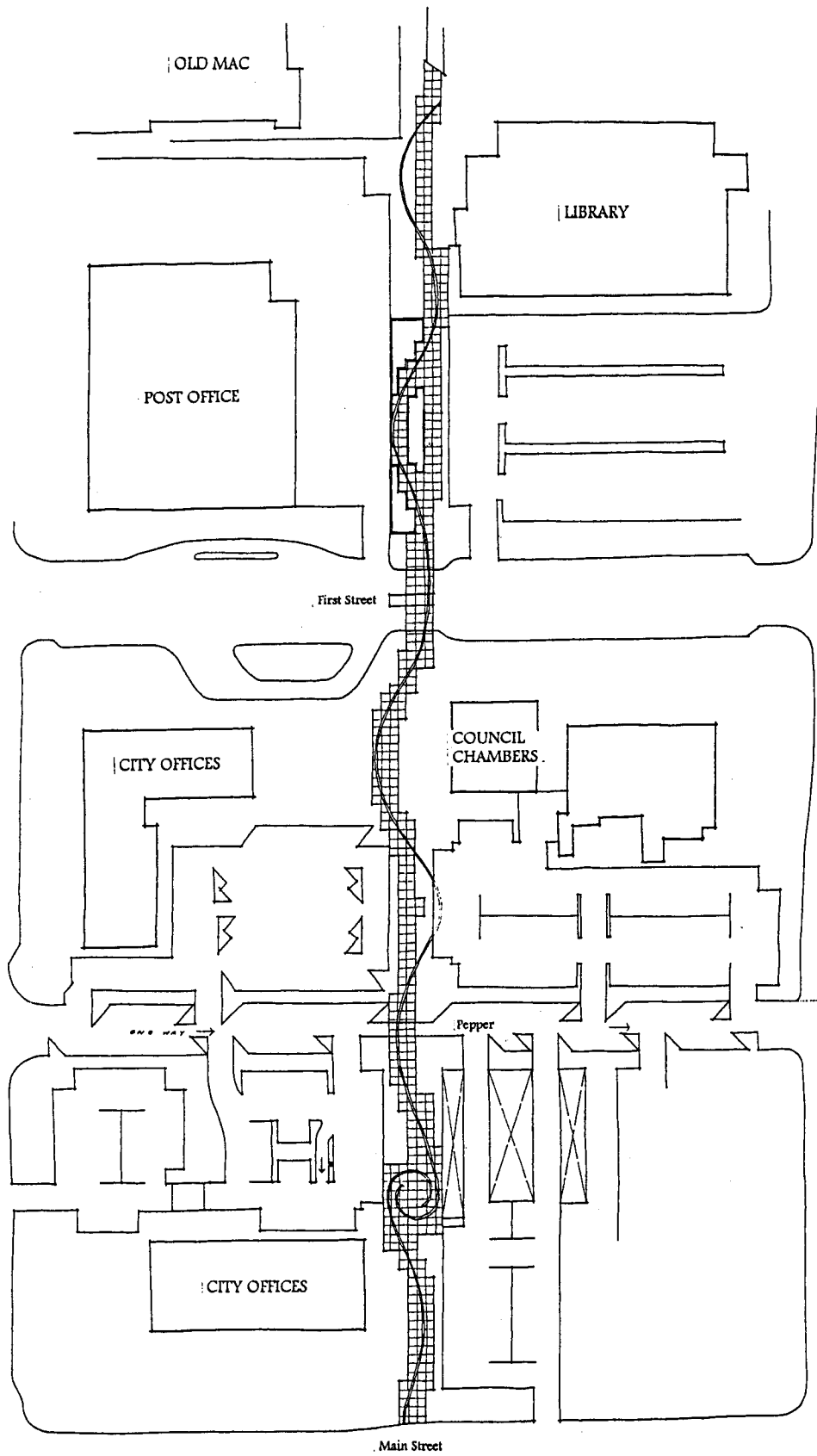
Canopy trees along pathway. One "pathway" species and one "accent" species. Additional trees will match existing adjacent species.

Vertical Icon Indicates path and node.

The line is an art piece. Sections can be used to reflect Mesa's history, future, its economy, interests and businesses along the path. Such as music, books, mail, city hall, etc.



The signage concept uses a natural concrete base.



MESA DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR  
Phase One Rough Sketch

## DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SITE ISSUES

